

CAPSULE SUMMARY
BA-3070
Robert Townsend House
1824 Frederick Road
Catonsville, Baltimore County
1941
Private

Located at 1824 Frederick Road, the Robert Townsend House, dating to 1941, is a common example of the upper-middle class residential buildings constructed in the wake of the Great Depression. A modest example of the Colonial Revival style, the Robert Townsend House was not designed with the more ornate details of many contemporary dwellings. The house has undergone considerable alterations, including the construction of a side entry in 1993 that joined the main block of the house to an existing building on the property.

The two-and-a-half story Colonial Revival style Robert Townsend House was constructed in 1941. The two-bay wide main block has a six-course Flemish bond brick masonry structural system with a two-bay wide wood frame west wing clad in vinyl siding. The foundation is brick, but its above-grade bonding could not be determined at the time of the survey. The side gable roof is clad in asphalt shingles. One interior end chimney rises along the east wall of the main block. An exterior stretcher bond brick chimney bisects the north elevation of the west wing. In 1993, an existing 1979 outbuilding was enlarged and renovated, and a one-and-a-half story, wood frame east wing was added to the main block, joining the house and the outbuilding. The result was the creation of an east wing to the main block. Clad in vinyl siding, the wing has a front gable roof clad in asphalt shingles. There is one exterior end stretcher bond brick chimney on the north elevation of this wing. The house, which fronts south along Frederick Road, sits back from the street on a secluded lot screened by mature shrubs. To the east of the building there is a circa 1950 shed. An ornamental garden was landscaped in the 1990s to the north of the west wing. The north and west sides of the property are heavily wooded. In 1973, the building ceased to function as a dwelling after it was bequeathed to the Catonsville Historical Society for use as offices and museum space.

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. BA-3070

1. Name of Property

(indicate preferred name)

historic Robert Townsend House (preferred)
other Catonsville Historical Society (current)

2. Location

street and number 1824 Frederick Road not for publication
city, town Catonsville vicinity
county Baltimore County

3. Owner of Property

(give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Catonsville Historical Society
street and number 1824 Frederick Road telephone 410.744.3034
city, town Catonsville state MD zip code 21228-5503

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Baltimore County Courthouse tax map and parcel map 100, parcel 306
city, town Towson liber 5452 folio 931

5. Primary Location of Additional Data

____ Contributing Resource in National Register District
____ Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
____ Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
____ Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
____ Recorded by HABS/HAER
____ Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT
____ Other: _____

6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function	Resource Count
____ district	____ public	____ agriculture	Contributing
X building(s)	X private	____ landscape	Noncontributing
____ structure	____ both	____ commerce/trade	____ buildings
____ site		X recreation/culture	____ sites
____ object		____ religion	____ structures
		____ domestic	____ objects
		____ education	____ Total
		____ funerary	
		____ government	
		____ health care	
		____ industry	
		____ work in progress	
		____ unknown	
		____ vacant/not in use	
		____ other:	
			Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory
			0

7. Description

Inventory No. BA-3070

Condition

<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> altered

Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The two-and-a-half story Colonial Revival style Robert Townsend House was constructed in 1941. The two-bay wide main block has a six-course Flemish bond brick masonry structural system with a two-bay wide wood frame west wing clad in vinyl siding. The foundation is brick, but its above-grade bonding could not be determined at the time of the survey. The side gable roof is clad in asphalt shingles. One interior end chimney rises along the east wall of the main block. An exterior stretcher bond brick chimney bisects the north elevation of the west wing. In 1993, an existing 1979 outbuilding was enlarged and renovated, and a one-and-a-half story, wood frame east wing was added to the main block, joining the house and the outbuilding. The result was the creation of an east wing to the main block. Clad in vinyl siding, the wing has a front gable roof clad in asphalt shingles. There is one exterior end stretcher bond brick chimney on the north elevation of this wing. The house, which fronts south along Frederick Road, sits back from the street on a secluded lot screened by mature shrubs. To the east of the building there is a circa 1950 shed. An ornamental garden was landscaped in the 1990s to the north of the west wing. The north and west sides of the property are heavily wooded. In 1973, the building ceased to function as a dwelling after it was bequeathed to the Catonsville Historical Society for use as offices and museum space.

EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION

The façade, or south elevation, comprises the two-bay wide main block and the two-bay wide west wing. The recessed entry is located on the west bay of the main block and has paneled sides and soffit surrounding the paneled single-leaf door. To the east of the door is one three-light casement window and one 8/8 window. Two 8/8 windows pierce the second story of the main block. All openings on the main block have wood surrounds and header sills. The south elevation of the west wing is pierced by two 8/8 windows with vinyl surrounds and sills at each of the two stories.

Each of the first and second stories of the east elevation is pierced by one 8/8 window. The attic story is pierced by one six-light casement window. All windows have wood surrounds and header sills.

The east bay of the main block's north elevation is pierced by one 8/8 window with wood surround and header sill at the first story. The west bay features a cantilevered wood frame bay window with a central 8/8 window flanked by two 6/6 windows, all of which have a shared vinyl surround and sill. The second story of the main block is pierced by two 8/8 windows with wood surrounds and header sills. There is one sash-and-paneled single-leaf door on the north elevation of the west wing. One 8/8 window pierces the first story of this wing. The second story of the west wing is pierced by two 8/8 windows. All openings on the wing have vinyl surrounds and sills.

The west elevation of the main block is pierced by one 8/8 window with wood surround and header sill on each of the first and second stories. One 8/8 window with vinyl surround and sill pierces each of the two stories of the west wing. The gable peak of the wing is pierced by a triangular louvered metal ventilator.

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No.BA-3070

Name Robert Townsend House, 1824 Frederick Road, Catonsville, Baltimore County
Continuation Sheet

Number 7 Page 2

In 1993, an addition was constructed on the east elevation of the main block, serving as a hyphen that connects existing 1979 building to the house. All openings on this wing have vinyl surrounds and sills. The south elevation of this east wing is pierced by one large tripartite window opening glazed with a central thirty-light fixed vinyl sash flanked by two ten-light fixed vinyl sash below six-light fixed vinyl sash. One four-light fixed vinyl window surmounts a 6/6 vinyl window on either side of the central tripartite opening. One semicircular fourteen-light fanlight pierces the half story in the gable peak.

The south bay of the wing's east elevation is pierced by one thirty-light double-leaf vinyl door. A gabled portico supported by vinyl-clad square posts shelters this entry. Four 6/6 windows pierce this elevation. Two of these windows have wood sash, while the remaining two have vinyl sash. Roughly central to the bay is a sash-and-paneled single-leaf door. There is one six-light casement window in the half story.

The north elevation of the east wing is pierced only at the half story by two rectangular louvered metal ventilators that flank the central chimney.

One sash-and-paneled single leaf door pierces the south bay of the east wing's west elevation. In addition, one 20-light fixed window and one 6/6 window also pierce this elevation. One 6-light casement window pierces the half story.

INTERIOR DESCRIPTION

The interior was not accessible at the time of the survey.

OUTBUILDING

East of the house there is a circa 1950 wood frame shed clad in vinyl siding. The structure, which rests on a panel-faced concrete block foundation, has a front gable roof clad in asphalt shingles. The façade of the garage is pierced by one sash-and-paneled door and two 6/6 windows. All openings have vinyl surrounds and sills.

8. Significance

Inventory No. BA-3070

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science	
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> social history	
	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning		<input type="checkbox"/> maritime history	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:	

Specific dates 1941, 1973, 1979, 1993

Architect/Builder Unknown

Construction dates 1941, 1979, 1993

Evaluation for:

☐ National Register

☐ Maryland Register

☒ not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance projects, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

Located at 1824 Frederick Road, the Robert Townsend House, dating to 1941, is a common example of the upper-middle class residential buildings constructed in the wake of the Great Depression. A modest example of the Colonial Revival style, the Robert Townsend House was not designed with the more ornate details of many contemporary dwellings. The house has undergone considerable alterations, including the construction of a side entry in 1993 that joined the main block of the house to an existing building on the property.

HISTORY

Catonsville's development began earlier than that of most communities in the county. In 1810, Charles Carroll of Carrollton, the last surviving signer of the Declaration of Independence, received a large tract of land on the north and south sides of the Frederick Turnpike.¹ Carroll conveyed the property to his son-in-law, Richard Caton, to develop the property. Due to Caton's financial difficulties at that time, Carroll retained legal title to the property until 1822. Under Carroll's direction, Caton divided the land into twenty smaller lots fronting Frederick Road, comprising the original village of Catonsville.² Carroll eventually transferred the land to Caton in 1822.³

Over the course of the next century, Catonsville developed from a small village on the outskirts of Baltimore to a thriving streetcar suburb. By 1880, the population of Catonsville reached 1,700 inhabitants. Within the next twenty years, the community had established the services of four churches, six fraternal and benevolent organizations, a library, a monthly newspaper, a national bank, and a post office.⁴

¹ Chartered in 1805, the Frederick Turnpike was also called Frederick Avenue during the late-19th century, and by 1930 was known as Frederick Road.

² Edward Orser and Joseph Arnold, *Catonsville 1880 to 1940 from Village to Suburb* (Norfolk, VA: The Donning Company, Publishers, 1989), p. 15.

³ Neal A. Brooks and Eric G. Rockel, *A History of Baltimore County* (Towson, MD: Friends of the Towson Library, Inc., 1979), pp. 298-299.

⁴ J. Thomas Scharf, *History of the Baltimore City and County from the Earliest Period to the Present Day, Including Biographical Sketches of their Representative Men* (Philadelphia, PA: Louis H. Everts, 1881; reprint edition Salem, MA: Higginson Book Company, nd), p. 821.

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No.BA-3070

Name Robert Townsend House, 1824 Frederick Road, Catonsville, Baltimore County
Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 2

The prosperity of the 1920s and the growth of suburbs around Baltimore City brought a surge of new construction and tremendous influx of new residents to Catonsville. The population jumped from nearly 5,000 in 1920 to over 9,000 in 1930, with almost 900 new dwellings built in the village core and in surrounding subdivisions.

The Colonial Revival style in which the Robert Townsend House was executed was the most prevalent style in which houses for middle and upper classes were constructed during the 1930s. During this decade, preservation efforts in Colonial Williamsburg and Greenfield Village, in Dearborn, Michigan, brought to light new information about the Colonial period of America's history. A new surge in interest in Colonial history, and more specifically, in Colonial architecture, resulted in an increasing amount of Colonial Revival style architecture to be constructed throughout the eastern United States. This style exalted America's democratic and nationalistic past.

In 1973, Mrs. Robert Townsend bequeathed the property to the Catonsville Historical Society for use as an office and museum. The most notable alteration to the Robert Townsend House since its construction in 1941 is the 1993 expansion of an existing 1979 building so that it is now joined to the main block of the house. The building is now open to the public for tours and educational events. Even though the town of Catonsville has continued to grow throughout the latter half of the 20th century, the neighborhood surrounding the Robert Townsend House remains largely residential.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. BA-3070

- Brooks, Neal A. and Eric G. Rockel. *A History of Baltimore County*. Towson, MD: Friends of the Towson Library, Inc., 1979.
- Orser, Edward and Joseph Arnold. *Catonsville 1880-1940 from Village to Suburb*. Norfolk, VA: The Donning Company, Publishers, 1989.
- Scharf, J. Thomas. *History of Baltimore City and County from the Earliest Period to the Present Day, Including Biographical Sketches of Their Representative Men*. Philadelphia, PA: Louis H. Everts, 1881; reprinted edition Salem, MA: Higginson Book Company, nd.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property Less than one acre
Acreage of historical setting Unknown
Quadrangle name Ellicott City

Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

Since 1941, the Robert Townsend House has been associated with the 3,492 square feet known as parcel 306 located on grid 12 of map 306, located in the Baltimore County Tax Assessor's office.

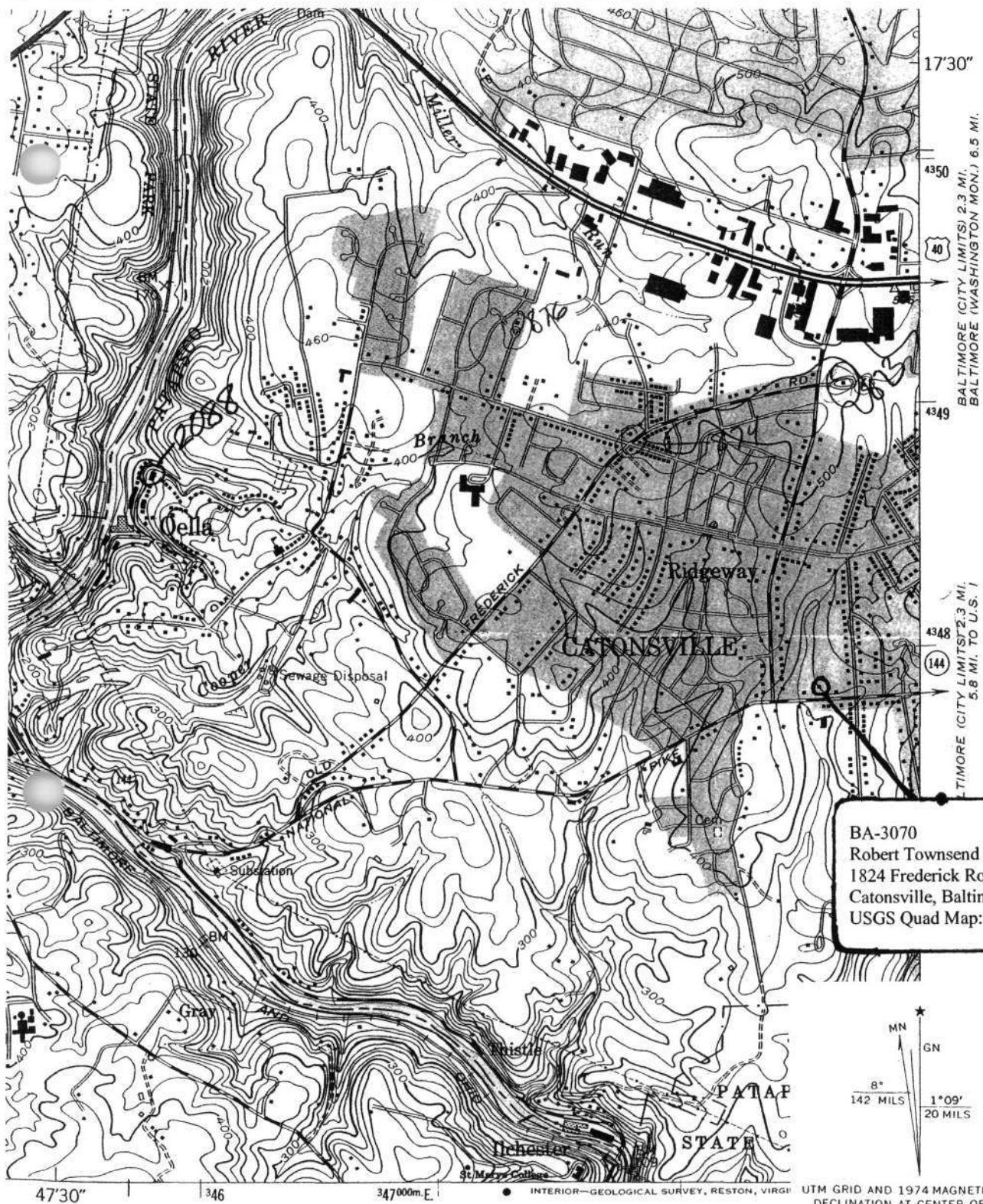
11. Form Prepared by

name/title	A. L. McDonald and L. V. Trieschmann, Architectural Historians		
organization	E.H.T. Tracerics, Inc.	date	10 November 2000
street & number	1121 5th Street NW	telephone	202.393.1199
city or town	Washington	state	DC

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
DHCD/DHCP
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023
410-514-7600





BA-3070

ROBERT TOWNSEND HOUSE
1824 FREDERICK ROAD, CATONSVILLE
BALTIMORE COUNTY, MARYLAND

TRACERIES

$1/2000$

MD SHPO

MAIN HOUSE, SOUTH ELEVATION, CAMERA
FACING NORTHEAST

$1/5$



BA-3070

ROBERT TOWNSEND HOUSE
1824 FREDERICK ROAD, CATONSVILLE
BALTIMORE COUNTY, MARYLAND

TRACERIES

10/2000

MD SHPO

MAIN HOUSE, SOUTHEAST CORNER, CAMERA
FACING NORTHWEST

2/5



BA-3070

ROBERT TOWNSEND HOUSE
1824 FREDERICK ROAD, CATONSVILLE
BALTIMORE COUNTY, MARYLAND

TRACERIES

10/2000

MD SHPO

MAIN HOUSE, WEST ELEVATION OF EAST
WING AND NORTH ELEVATION OF MAIN
BLOCK AND WEST WING, CAMERA FACING
SOUTHEAST

3/5



BA-3070

ROBERT TOWNSEND HOUSE
1824 FREDERICK ROAD, CATONSVILLE
BALTIMORE COUNTY, MARYLAND

TRACERIES
10/2000

MD SHPO
MAIN HOUSE, WEST ELEVATION, CAMERA
FACING EAST

4/5



BA-3070

ROBERT TOWNSEND HOUSE
1824 FREDERICK ROAD, CATONSVILLE
BALTIMORE COUNTY, MARYLAND

TRACERIES

10/2000

MD SHPO

GARAGE, SOUTHWEST CORNER, CAMERA
FACING NORTHEAST

5/5